Hurriyat Conference's move to create a Unified Political Command

*344. DR. KARAN SINGH: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the Hurriyat Conference's move to create a unified cross-border political command centred in Kashmir Valley, modelled on Yasser Arafat's PLO for a self-sustaining "struggle for self-determination";

(b) whether the demand for such a political command has been pressed by prominent expatriate Kashmiris and in the process the political outfit is understood to be planning the setting-up of a global network of Kashmir Missions in key capitals around the world; and

(c) if so, Government's reaction to this move and the plan in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) to (c) There are reports that Kashmiri expatriate community has been pressing Hurriyat Conference for setting up a cross-border political command in Kashmir and PoK. The announcement by Hurriyat conference regarding its intentions of setting up their own election commission to elect representatives from both sides of LOC/IB who would participate in any negotiations on Kashmir, could be a step in the same direction. Former Chairman of Hurriyat Conference, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, had reportedly announced plans as far back as on December 16, 2000 to open APHC offices in several foreign countries. The Government is keeping a close watch on the situation.